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4TH SUPPORT BATTALION, 1ST BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

HAMBONE EXPRESS

Battalion Commander's Corner 4th SB Arrives in Kuwait!

To the soldiers and family members of the **Packhorse Battalion**...we have successfully deployed and safely arrived in Theatre. We have trained and are now ready to assume our mission as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I am extremely proud of the professionalism, dedication and motivation of every soldier in this formation. You demonstrate your commitment to mission accomplishment every day. I appreciate your efforts thus far and I know that we will be successful through completion of Reception, Staging and Onward Movement. You continue to participate in the best training available. This training builds confidence across the formation. The end result is a cohesive unit trained in its warrior tasks and drills, with soldiers confident in themselves, their weapons and equipment. Every soldier must know that they are an important member of the Packhorse family. I appreciate your sacrifices and those made by your families at FT Hood or wherever they currently reside. We could not do what we do without their support.

During this Holiday Season I want to wish everyone a very happy holiday season and the best in the coming year. To the soldiers I again say thanks for all of your efforts. To the Packhorse families thousands of miles away, thank you for your support and thanks for all you do.

Packhorse 6

LTC Michael Snow



Command Sergeant Major's Corner

This is Packhorse 7 signing in. Well so far things are going good and our soldiers are doing great things. We have been conducting good realistic training; our soldiers have been firing bullets down range and have become confident in their individual weapons. All our soldiers are motivated and have been diligently preparing for our trip up north. We've had no serious injuries and have been great at maintaining accountability of all assigned equipment. We have completed Convoy Live Fire Training; this was realistic training that will give our soldiers the experience and confidence they need to perform their mission off the FOB (Forward Operating Base). Finally I would just like to thank all the soldiers of Packhorse and the families back home for their service to this country and for all their contribution to the Packhorse family.

This is Packhorse 7 out.

CSM Ronny Martinez



Family Readiness Group



4SB Arrives in Kuwait!

Greetings and Happy Holidays from Camp Buehring, Kuwait! The 4th Support Battalion has finally made it to an interim destination and we're still motivated and full of energy for the journey ahead. The past several weeks have been full of familiarization with the area, downloading equipment, training and of course...missing our families!

The transition to deployed life-style has been rather smooth and painless, despite the permeating odor of portable toilets. We have to admit that the accommodations for living and food are more than adequate and should be even better once we move North.

Though we'll be separated from you all for the holidays, please know that you are in our foremost thoughts and we

appreciate your support in our effort to defend America's freedom!

-SSG BIGGINS



HEATSEEKERS



Hitting the ground running!

And that is just what Headquarters, Headquarter Company 4th Support Battalion has been doing since landing their tan boots in sunny but lately cloudy Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Training has been nonstop and very informative for soldiers and leaders. We have received all the knowledge and skills training that will help keep us safe during this yearlong deployment. HHC training included: Simulation training, Weapon Posture Training, CREW Training, and PSD just to name a few. Our first big training event was weapons zero and weapon familiarization training. Before leaving Fort Hood all soldiers were required to qualify on their weapon system. However, once in theater all soldiers were required to zero again on their weapon. We also had the opportunity to familiarize ourselves with other weapons like the M240B, M14, and the .50 cal. One of the most important training was the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) class. The IED class was very moving and instructive. We also underwent a Live Fire exercise simulating a convoy going through a town and identifying insurgents. This class was the most exhilarating and kept everyone on his and her P's and Q's.

Training has not been all that the Heatseekers have been doing. Our equipment finally arrived and we have been conducting maintenance, and installing the necessary communication devices for the trip up north. You would think with all the training we would hit the sacks hard. Wrong! PT is still in full swing. We still have to maintain our warrior bodies throughout the duration of the tour.

I know that your deployed hero has told you that all we do is train, but did they tell you that they have many reminders of home? We have internet, phone centers, basketball courts, volleyball courts, a gym, MWR with video games, flat screen TV's, a movie theater, Bazaars, Burger King, Subway, Taco Bell. Whewww! That was a mouth full, I cannot even name them all. Therefore, you see we have hit the ground running and I do not think that it will slow down. However, it will only make the year go by faster.

CPT CALDWELL



Training at a Glance

Training for war is hard to do for soldiers on their first deployment. It is hard to snap yourself into a mode of complete concentration from which you have never experienced. The awareness is that training is over and real life war is upon you. The classes our noncommissioned officers have covered are a variety of defense, self defense, and tactical procedures. In order for us to understand, explain, and apply our knowledge, you must first take a look at the facts. Everything you learn in the Army is a perishable skill, and you must train on the skills to preserve them. This is exactly what we need to do to accomplish our common goal- doing the job we are here to do and then make it home in one piece. In short, our training has been a great way to sharpen our skills and get updated on the new way of handling yourself and your fellow soldiers. I personally feel that the last few days of training have been more helpful than the last year I have spent in the Army. Okay, maybe that was an exaggeration, but it was only to try and explain how much the training really has helped and the way our hands-on went.

I know that our platoon-level training is also just as important to the mission. You train as you fight. What that means to me is that it is good to have an idea of what your battle buddy is going to do out in the real situation. When you drive down an IED-covered road and the convoy is stopped, you want to know what that TC is going to do. You want to know whether he/she is going to check his/her 5 and 25 or just jump into the next explosive sending you under a few tons of bullet proof glass and thick doors. To think about the wrong actions in the wrong situations motivates me to learn what I can before I am unintentionally the responsible soldier for another's death.

I also think our weapons classes went well and it is a helpful to know what weapon has what different capabilities and when the appropriate situation is to use the M249 or the M203. Sure am glad that launching a grenade from the M203 within a thirty-one meter radius is a bad thing and that the kill radius is only a five meter radius. Good training should tell you things for any situation so you are more ready than the opponent. The Army gives you the upper hand for a reason so you can keep hold of it and use your knowledge to grasp on for your life. I also learned how to take care of casualties in a given situation and that a 9-line MEDEVAC actually has 9-lines and I can save another soldier's limb with a tight tourniquet. What truly matters to me is making it home and watching the other soldiers next to me get off the bus and greet their families once again.



I think we have a company and a battalion that can grasp hold of the information we receive. It shows that at least in the last few training sessions, we can learn, practice, and test our knowledge, and we can think on our feet. I only mean to show my support for the great things Alpha Company is going to do while in this country and the great way we will reflect our leadership and our battalion. We are in the 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized), the most technologically advanced division in the U.S. Army.

By: PVT Stephen C Clark

A Co, Trans plt



MADDAWG MAYHEM

For some of us it was a tearful goodbye and for others, after all the planning and preparation we were ready to leave. And everybody was ready to get off that plane! It most definitely seemed like the longest plane ride of our lives, as the realization struck us: we are the chosen. We are the ones who volunteered, knowing we'd have to fight, knowing that some of us might not come back, and now we're here. Here to complete the mission, some of us for a second time. Praying that our cause should be righteous and our actions just. With faith in our comrades and the best of training still fresh in our minds and drilled into our bodies our hands will be steady and our aim will be true.

Here in Kuwait, Bravo Company of the 4th Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Division has taken every opportunity to train as we fight, to complete our mission with the most efficiency and safety utmost in our minds. We've gone over everything from first aid, where we'll never forget the time SGT Skea let us practice the Nasopharyngeal Airway on him, to learning everything we can on weapons, weapons posture and, once again, safety, and then going over all of it again. With ranges almost everyday, going over any and every weapon we could get our hands on from the M16 to the M249, from the M14 M2 50cal and M240 Bravo, you can bet everyone is coming home safe and sound.

In our spare time we've been learning things about each other that, otherwise, we would never have had the opportunity to have known, becoming as one with our squad, platoon, and company, learning each other's strengths and weaknesses, but most of all, working as a team.

Though there will be no white Christmas for us this year, and the fireworks on New Years will be real, this is our family now and we pull each other through, knowing that we can depend on each other, and of course the USO and MWR taking care of us during these holidays away from home let us know that we are appreciated.

From each of and every one of us here in Bravo Company, we send our thanks and our love to our families, friends, those supporting us in the rear, and those supporting us here. Pray for us as we fight through the night, and we will see you when we get back home.

PFC Bennett, Ayla Lee





“Home away from home”

The sacrifice we make for our country brings us here this holiday. With help of the MWR, Christmas decorations have been furnished all around the camp, especially in the dining facilities. It's not home but it is the best we have. We have even had a Christmas band come out about a week ago with their Santa hats and merry Christmas songs. It is tough being away from our families but we have one another for support. We will be together for the next year and we will need to make the best of it. After all we have been training together for the past few months. Back at home we trained with the Gatesville Prison Guards who taught us the latest combative techniques and how to express intimidation onto the dummies we worked with. We spent a lot of time with Military Police NCOs who have worked at the detainee centers and they handed over a lot of first hand knowledge such as: how to properly detain and search detainees, and the tools used. Aside from the operations of the IDCP, we are being educated about the Arab culture and religion which provides a solid basis for our interaction in country. We are also prepared for other circumstances that may arise that may not pertain to the IDCP such as IEDs, the media, and convoys. It is neat working with a platoon full of medics. Those who are not specialized in that field are learning a lot about first aid and mental health. Some of the junior enlisted feel much of the training has been redundant but they also say reiteration is necessary to be professionals in our duties. While we wait, more close knit training is being conducted. A lot of junior enlisted and NCOs have enjoyed the training received here. They feel it is the best yet because it puts you closest to real life situations and that is what the soldiers are excited about. I have personally learned a lot about myself in just one training exercise. They teach you a lot about yourself to see how you may react out in the field and the areas you might want to work on.

A lot of those who have been here before do not know what to expect as a lot has changed this time around. For instance, there is access to internet, shower and laundry facilities are readily available and we have even brought Burger King, Subway and Baskin Robbins with us. Granted, it does not taste the same but it is better than MREs. The lines may be monotonously long but service is expedient. The best things here, they say, for those in their second tour, are the porter johns and the communication home. All in all it is not the mediocre living conditions we are concerned about. We are focused on training the Iraqis to secure their homeland, that way we can be home with our families and loved ones. After a year, I would have hoped to feel the experience was great with all lessons learned to add in the story of my life. From our hearts- we wish our families a sweet Merry Christmas and a joyful New Year's. You are always on our minds and we'll be coming home to you next Christmas.

-PFC Saeturn



DECEMBER EVENTS!

The following Soldiers and NCOs from the “Mighty packhorse Battalion” have recently reconfirmed their commitment to the United States Army and the 4th Support Battalion. When you see these outstanding “Packhorse Soldiers”, take the time to shake their hands and thank them for their decisions!

ALPHA COMPANY

SGT ALBERT
SSG CANTU
SPC LAWRENCE

BRAVO COMPANY

SPC BUSH
SSG COTTRELL
CPL FINISTER
SSG GAUSE
SSG KOZAK
SPC MATEIKA
SGT ROJAS
SGT RUIZ, M.
SSG TOLSON

CHARLIE COMPANY

SSG FRIEND
SPC JOHNSON, M.
SSG MILLER
SSG VAIL
SGT RUIZ, A.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

SPC MCCOY
PFC JOHNSON
SGT CHILDS

STAY ARMY!



PROMOTIONS!

(EFFECTIVE 1 JANUARY)

SGT DONOVAN-HHC TO STAFF SERGEANT
SPC JOHNSON-HHC TO SERGEANT
SPC HARRIS-CCO TO SERGEANT

BIRTHDAYS!

SPC AMOS
SPC BARBUCH
CPT BEERBOWER
PFC BOESCH
SPC BROWNING
PFC BURNS
PFC CANAS
SGT CLARK
PV2 CYGANIEWICZ
PFC DIETZMAN
SPC GILENWATER
SGT GUDIEL
SGT HAFEN
SGT HAMILTON

PFC HORN
SGT HUBBARD
SPC LOPEZ
MAJ LOREN
SPC MATEIKA
PV2 MCINTYRE
CPT MINICA
PV2 NOBLES
PFC ODAM
CPT PATTERSON
SGT SHIRLEY
SSG SIMMONS
SFC SMITH
SGT TIRADO

SPC TULENSRU
SPC WALKER

ACU WEAR AND APPEARANCE



PHOTO SCOOPS!

Enclosed on the last page of this newsletter will be pictures from around the battalion of individual Soldiers and units conducting training, social time and day-to-day social activities. If you want pictures from your unit, events such as reenlistments, promotions or your Battle Buddy posted in the newsletter, make sure you get them to the S-1 prior to print time.



PICTURES!



SFC(P) ALLEN AND SFC VENABLE PASSING THE TIME IN SHANNON, IRELAND



SGT GUDIEL AND SGT HAMILTON TAKING A BREAK AFTER SOME TRAINING WHILE ON ADVON



LTC SNOW(LEFT) AND CSM MARTINEZ SHOW THE PACKHORSE BATTALION HOW TO SEND ROUNDS DOWN RANGE!



PACKHORSE SOLDIERS GET READY TO FIRE A VARIETY OF WEAPONS DURING A RE-CENT RANGE.